

Subpart Q - Roles and Responsibilities of Service Agents

§ 40.355 What limitations apply to the activities of service agents?

As a service agent, you are subject to the following limitations concerning your activities in the DOT drug and alcohol testing program.

(a) You must not require an employee to sign a consent, release, waiver of liability, or indemnification agreement with respect to any part of the drug or alcohol testing process covered by this part (including, but not limited to, collections, laboratory testing, MRO, and SAP services). No one may do so on behalf of a service agent.

(b) You must not act as an intermediary in the transmission of drug test results from the laboratory to the MRO. That is, the laboratory may not send results to you, with you in turn sending them to the MRO for verification. For example, a practice in which the laboratory transmits results to your computer system, and you then assign the results to a particular MRO, is not permitted.

(c) You must not transmit drug test results directly from the laboratory to the employer (by electronic or other means) or to a service agent who forwards them to the employer. All confirmed laboratory results must be processed by the MRO before they are released to any other party.

(d) You must not act as an intermediary in the transmission of alcohol test results of 0.02 or higher from the STT or BAT to the DER.

(e) Except as provided in paragraph (f) of this section, you must not act as an intermediary in the transmission of individual SAP reports to the actual employer. That is, the SAP may not send such reports to you, with you in turn sending them to the actual employer. However, you may maintain individual SAP summary reports and follow-up testing plans after they are sent to the DER, and the SAP may transmit such reports to you simultaneously with sending them to the DER.

(f) As an exception to paragraph (e) of this section, you may act as an intermediary in the transmission of SAP report from the SAP to an owner-operator or other self-employed individual.

(g) Except as provided in paragraph (h) of this section, you must not make decisions to test an employee based upon reasonable suspicion, post-accident, return-to-duty, and follow-up determination criteria. These are duties the actual employer cannot delegate to a C/TPA. You may, however, provide advice and information to employers regarding these testing issues and how the employer should schedule required testing.

(h) As an exception to paragraph (g) of this section, you may make decisions to test an employee based upon reasonable suspicion, post-accident, return-to-duty, and follow-up determination criteria with respect to an owner-operator or other self-employed individual.

(i) Except as provided in paragraph (j) of this section, you must not make a determination that an employee has refused a drug or alcohol test. This is a non-delegable duty of the actual employer. You may, however, provide advice and information to employers regarding refusal-to-test issues.

(j) As an exception to paragraph (i) of this section, you may make a determination that an employee has refused a drug or alcohol test, if:

(1) You schedule a required test for an owner-operator or other self-employed individual, and the individual fails to appear for the test without a legitimate reason; or

(2) As an MRO, you determine that an individual has refused to test on the basis of adulteration or substitution.

(k) You must not act as a DER. For example, while you may be responsible for transmitting information to the employer about test results, you must not act on behalf of the employer in actions to remove employees from safety-sensitive duties.

(l) In transmitting documents to laboratories, you must ensure that you send to the laboratory that conducts testing only the laboratory copy of the CCF. You must not transmit other copies of the CCF or any ATFs to the laboratory.

(m) You must not impose conditions or requirements on employers that DOT regulations do not authorize. For example, as a C/TPA serving employers in the pipeline or motor carrier industry, you must not require employers to have provisions in their DOT plans that RSPA or FMCSA regulations do not require.

(n) You must not intentionally delay the transmission of drug or alcohol testing-related documents concerning actions you have performed, because of a payment dispute or other reasons.

Example 1 to Paragraph (n): A laboratory that has tested a specimen must not delay transmitting the documentation of the test result to an MRO because of a billing or payment dispute with the MRO or a C/TPA.

Example 2 to Paragraph (n): An MRO or SAP who has interviewed an employee must not delay sending a verified test result or SAP report to the employer because of such a dispute with the employer or employee.

Example 3 to Paragraph (n): A collector who has performed a urine specimen collection must not delay sending the drug specimen and CCF to the laboratory because of a payment or other dispute with the laboratory or a C/TPA.

Example 4 to Paragraph (n): A BAT who has conducted an alcohol test must not delay sending test result information to an employer or C/TPA because of a payment or other dispute with the employer or C/TPA.

(o) While you must follow the DOT agency regulations, the actual employer remains accountable to DOT for compliance, and your failure to implement any aspect of the program as required in this part and other applicable DOT agency regulations makes the employer subject to enforcement action by the Department.

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